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Quarterly Report
Second Quarter 2005

Applicants Sought for Animal Care Advisory Board Service

Six positions on the Animal Care Facilities Act (ACFA) advisory committee will have terms expiring in January 2006. These positions represent the following categories:

1. Animal Shelter: a person who operates or supervises an animal shelter.
2. Pound or Dog Pound: a person who operates or is employed by a pound or dog pound.
3. Dealer: a person who is engaged in the business of buying dogs or cats for the purpose of resale.
4. Veterinarian: a professional who is licensed pursuant to chapter 340, RSMo.
5. Missouri Animal Control Association: a person representing the Missouri Animal Control Association. (Applicants should maintain current membership and the endorsement of the association.)
6. Professional Cat Breeders: a person representing professional cat breeders.

The ACFA advisory committee was established to assist the director of agriculture in establishing rules and to provide ongoing review of the administration of the Animal Care Facilities Act. Advisory committee members receive no compensation or reimbursement for expenses incurred while performing their duties. Each term lasts two years.

The committee has 13 members and meets at the Missouri Department of Agriculture building, Jefferson City. Anyone who can represent the open seats is invited to apply by contacting Dr. Jerry Eber, Veterinarian II, Missouri Department of Agriculture, Division of Animal Health, P.O. Box 630, Jefferson City, Mo. 65102. The Department of Agriculture welcomes all applications from interested parties who meet the qualifications as defined by statute.

Out-of-State Inspections Ensure Compliance with ACFA

The ACFA Program conducts out-of-state facility inspections in order to ensure that those coming to Missouri conduct business and meet standards required by ACFA. During the past several months, inspectors have conducted several inspections and gathered records from ACFA-licensed facilities located in neighboring states.

Dr. Eber explains, “by conducting these inspections, we ensure the proper care of animals and strengthen ties to sister agencies.” Inspections are often conducted with other agencies.

Canine Care Workshops Currently Being Planned

The Missouri Department of Agriculture (MDA), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine are currently planning two 2005 Canine Care Workshops.

The first workshop will be held on August 20, 2005 at the Days Inn, Kirksville and the second will be held on August 27, 2005 at the Holiday Inn, Joplin. Both sessions require a \$25.00 registration fee which includes lunch for those who pre-register. The workshops are worth 6.5 education units for professionals requiring continuing education. For additional information regarding these workshops, call (573) 751-3076.

People Seeking Pets Should Do Their Research

Families and individuals seeking a new pet shouldn't act on impulse. Thousands of dogs and cats are turned over to pounds and animal shelters each year and many of them are given away because the pet is incompatible with the owners' lifestyle. A number of factors should be considered before seeking out your next dog or cat.

First, individuals seeking a new dog or cat should keep in mind the purpose of the animal. Are you seeking out a companion, breeder or working dog? If you are looking for a companion animal, you should seek out a breed or type that displays a temperament consistent with your lifestyle. Take into consideration the following questions: Is the dog highly active or a couch potato? Is it tolerant of children? Can it be confined to an apartment, or is it hardy to the outdoors?

If you wish to breed your dog, consult literature on the breed standard, and quiz the breeder on the traits displayed by the animal. Intact animals should be kept in secure areas to prevent unintended matings. If you seek a working dog, ask to see the sire and dam. Traits in working dogs are heritable. For instance, dogs that make superior hunters are likely to produce puppies that will be successful hunters. In the same regard, a cat intended for use as a "mouser" should have a dam that has taught it how to hunt. A spoiled housecat is not acclimated to live outside and will likely make a poor hunter.

Second, take into consideration the facility from which you are obtaining your animal. The ACFA Program receives numerous complaints that resemble the following scenario:

A new owner finds an animal, and while it is sick, they feel the obligation to take it home. The new owner incurs a significant veterinary bill and a tremendous amount of heartache in rehabilitating the animal. Finally, the new owner files a complaint against the breeder or shelter, and an investigation ensues.

Select a healthy animal from a reputable facility. Indiscriminate breeders only exist because of indiscriminate buyers. Ask if there is a warranty against severe illness or abnormality, and take your newly adopted pet to a licensed veterinarian within the first week of purchase.

Finally, consider the physical requirements in caring for your dog or cat. You should make provisions for food, water, shelter and veterinary care. Keep in mind the amount of grooming and exercise required by your new pet.

Taking your time in selecting a new pet will help to curb the number of animals turned over to public and private shelters each year. Selecting a new pet is a significant decision and one that should not be taken lightly.

Frequently Asked Question:

We are always open to questions. Through the use of this column, we hope to answer some questions that are commonly asked of our staff.

What does the state require on kennel inspections?

Routine inspections generally inspect the condition of the animals, the condition of the facility, as well as a records inspection. ACFA facilities are required to provide adequate food, water, housing and veterinary care for their animals. Licensees are required to provide wholesome food and potable water, housing as outlined in the ACFA regulations and maintain the animals in sanitary conditions. Dogs requiring veterinary care are specifically noted on the inspection report.

Facility conditions must be in good repair, surfaces clean and sanitized, drainage systems must work, temperature requirements met, ventilation adequate and animals must be provided with sufficient space. Licensees keep records of where they acquire their dogs, veterinary care while under their possession and a record of disposition. Documented annual visits by the attending veterinarian and records of the dogs on hand are required.

Each category of licensee has different things to look for during an inspection, but most items will relate directly to the dog or cat, its surroundings or its record.

Census of ACFA Facilities

(As of March 9, 2005)

Commercial Breeders	1,614
Commercial Kennels	34
Boarding Kennels	135
Dealer/Broker	128
Pet Shops	83
Contract Kennels	17
Exhibitors	5
Hobby/Show Licensed	28
Hobby/Show Registered	257
Animal Shelters	71
Rescues	120
Municipal Dog Pounds	219
Pet Sitters	9
Intermediate Handlers	11
Carriers	3
Total	2,734

Dual-Licensed Facilities

Dog and cat breeders within Missouri that harbor more than three intact females and sell to brokers, dealers or pet stores are required to be licensed with USDA and MDA. These facilities are referred to as dual-licensed facilities and are required to maintain a license from both agencies.

Contact USDA:

2150 Centre Avenue, Building B
Mail Stop #3W11
Fort Collins, Co. 80526-8117
Phone: (970) 494-7478
Web site: www.usda.gov

Contact MDA:

P.O. Box 630
Jefferson City, Mo. 65102
Phone: (573) 751-3076
Fax: (573) 526-2059
Email: acfa@mda.mo.gov

New ACFA Inspector

The ACFA Program has added an officer to its roster. Animal Health Officer, Joe Atterberry has joined the ACFA field staff during the second quarter of 2005. Joe has been employed by the Missouri Department of Agriculture for several years and formerly worked in large animal programs. Joe is eagerly anticipating his assignment with ACFA and will, tentatively, oversee the counties of Lawrence, Stone, Christian, Taney, Douglas, Ozark, Howell, Shannon and Oregon. These counties compose the vacant district left behind by Lee Weeks upon his retirement. We hope that you will extend a welcome to our new inspector, Joe Atterberry.

On the same note, we receive a number of calls concerning individuals that arrive at kennels portraying themselves as animal health officers. ACFA officials will have a picture id that says "Missouri Department of Agriculture." MDA officers drive an official vehicle displaying a Missouri license plate with an 11 prefix.

Compliance Activity

A commercial breeder in Audrain County agreed to meet exempt status after demonstrating an inability to properly care for the number of dogs in their possession. They face additional fees and a penalty if they decide to reopen.

An unlicensed commercial breeder in Macon County voluntarily surrendered their dogs in order to meet exempt status. Substandard conditions prompted the action.

USDA and ACFA are currently monitoring the status of a commercial breeder in Miller County. The licensee has agreed to reduce the number of dogs at the kennel in place of hiring additional employees.

Members of the Missouri Pet Breeders Association rescued several Dobermans and Rottweillers after the owner, a licensed commercial breeder, was incarcerated on unrelated charges.

We are currently working on facilities that have failed to renew their license for 2005.

Per Capita Statistics for Shelters, Pounds, and Rescues

Each year, we receive Sunshine Law requests regarding the disposition of dogs received by municipal pounds, animal shelters and rescues. The following statistics reveal numbers provided by those entities during the 2004-2005 renewal period:

ACFA Designation	Received	Adopted	Euthanized	Returned to Owner
Animal Shelters	57,174	28,944	20,201	3,478
Pounds/Dog Pounds	77,573	16,338	33,212	12,613
Rescues	9,118	8,140	201	37
TOTAL	143,865	53,422	53,614	16,218

Pet owners can increase the likelihood of their animal being returned by using proper identification, keeping a photograph of their pet on hand and ensuring that outdoor pens are properly maintained. Spaying or neutering your pet will reduce their desire to roam. Unintended matings are a significant factor in animals that are relinquished to these entities.